

**Amendments to the Claims**

1. (currently amended) A method for background adjustment, the method comprising:
  - a) estimating a background lightness level in an original image;
  - b) converting pixels in the original image to a luminance-chrominance color space, wherein pixels having lightness levels substantially equal to the background lightness level are mapped as background pixels such that their lightness values are set substantially equal to a value corresponding to white;
  - c) comparing chroma values for the background pixels to at least one threshold;
  - d) adjusting lightness levels for any background pixels having chroma values above a first threshold to a new lightness level indicating that color of that pixel is to be preserved, producing lightness adjusted pixels;
  - e) removing chroma from any background pixels having chroma values below a second threshold indicating that the color of that pixel should be removed, producing color adjusted pixels; and
  - f) converting to a color space of an output device, wherein conversion is performed on all pixels including any lightness adjusted pixels and color-adjusted pixels.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein estimating a background lightness level further comprises building histograms of each line of the original image and then determining a high peak value in the histograms.
3. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein determining a high peak value in the histograms further comprises using a minimum white to determine if the high peak value is used in estimating overall background lightness level.
4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first and second thresholds are substantially equal to 20 for text mode, and 10 for all other modes.
5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the value corresponding to white is 255.

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